bound programme for providing post offices and PCOs in those villages;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) to what extent the Panchayat Sanchar Seva Scheme has so far performed?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) The number of villages in the country which have post offices till date is 134282. 226913. villages have PCOs.

(b) The number of villages without post offices in Madhya Pradesh is 61439. 48208 villages in Madhya Pradesh do not have PCOs.

(c) and (d) Post Offices are opened progressively under Annual Plan Schemes subject to fulfilment of Departmental norms and availability of resources. The policy of the Department is to open Post Offices in rural areas preferably in Gram Panchayat villages justifying Post Offices. As for PCOs, all remaining villages are proposed to be provided with PCOs, facility in the 9th Five Year Plan period.

(e) At present 497 Panchayat Sanchar Seva Kendras are functioning in the country.

Training to Employees for Digital Communications System

1241. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have selected NIIT and Uptron to train about one lakh middle level employees to handle digital communications system; and

(b) if so, the details of the agreement?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) The Department of Telecom has awarded Work Orders to M/s NIIT Ltd. and M/s Uptron India Ltd. on 6.5.96 to provide 2 weeks training in computers to 42,700 officials eligible for appointment as Senior Telecom Operating Assistants in 4 streams viz. General, Phones, Telegraph General and Telegraphy.

(b) No agreeement has been signed between the Department and the training institutions. However, work orders have been given to them to implement the aforesaid training programme and the salient features of the work order are as follows:—

(i) M/s NIIT Ltd. have been given Work Orders to impart training to 21,300 officials of the following Telecom Circles:—
Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Madras Telephone District, MTNL Delhi, North East, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra.

(ii) The Work Order placed on M/s Uptron India Ltd. provides for training to 21,400 officials of the following Telecom Circles:—
Andhra Pradesh, Calcutta Telephone District, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, MTNL Mumbai, U.P. (East) and U.P. (West).

(iii) The training shall be of 2 weeks duration and the training fee @ Rs. 2,400/- per trainee is payable to these institutes.

Abolition of Reservation for Non-Quota Exporters in Handloom Sector

1242. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have abolished reservation available for the handloom sector within the Non-quota Exporters entitlement;

(b) if so, the details regarding the new policy laid down for distribution levels yarn, fabrics mill-made and powerloom madeups as also handlooms separately;

(c) whether it is a fact that this is the third time revision of the policy since